

Condition Assessment
and
Significance Evaluation
for Cultural Resources
between the
Glen Canyon Dam and Paria Riffle,
Glen Canyon National
Recreation Area

Or, Up and Down the
Colorado River in a Banana Boat
doing Archaeology

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Project Objectives

- Reassess 53 previously documented archaeological sites in the Glen Canyon Reach
- Produce a total station map for each site tied to a GPS datum
- Assess current condition and potential natural and cultural impacts for each site
- Evaluate each site for NRHP eligibility
- Propose treatment plans for eligible sites









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- Prehistoric sites
 - Archaic and Anasazi petroglyphs







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 - Inscriptions

1890
HISD





1925

DEC 4 1878 THIS ROCK
SENTINEL TO PASSING
WAGONS OF FIRST MESA
COMPANY UNDER THE
COMMAND OF HYRUM
SMITH PHELPS

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 - Navajo sites





Site Eligibility Evaluation

- 34 sites recommended eligible for nomination
 - 2 under Criterion A
 - 5 under Criterion C
 - 22 under Criterion D
 - 5 under more than one criteria
- 14 sites recommended not eligible
- 5 sites recommended potentially eligible but require testing to make a determination

Site Condition Assessment

- 3 sites are in excellent condition
- 24 sites are in good condition
- 16 sites are in fair condition
- 10 sites are in poor condition

Types of Impacts

- Natural erosion
 - slopewash
 - mass wasting
 - exfoliation of rock faces
 - alluvial erosion/gullies













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- Natural erosion
 - slopewash, mass wasting, exfoliation, alluvial erosion
- Visitor impacts
 - vandalism, esp. of petroglyphs
 - visitor infrastructure







Types of Impacts

- Natural erosion
 - slopewash, mass wasting, exfoliation, alluvial erosion
- Visitor impacts
 - vandalism, infrastructure
- Combined natural/cultural impacts
 - trails that become drainages
 - infrastructure that promotes erosion
 - probable river-based/dam-related erosion







Possible Treatment Options

- No treatment
- Stabilization
- Additional documentation
- Test excavation to determine significance or extent of cultural deposits
- Complete excavation to mitigate adverse impacts

















What We Learned

- Archaeological sites in the Glen Canyon Reach have good data potential and can be grouped into several interesting historic research contexts
- The majority of sites are in stable geomorphic settings and are not in imminent danger
- Impacts to sites often reflect both natural and cultural forces
- Some sites can be stabilized but others will require active treatment (stabilization or mitigation)

What Else We Learned

- Never try to go upstream with a 15 hp motor
- ...you'd be better off paddling!



